recommendations on various facets of agriculture and its allied sectors. The tenure of the Commission is upto 13th October, 2006 by which it is to submit its Final report to the Government.

(d) and (e) Since the Commission has its Terms of Reference, the question of review of the utility of the Commission does not arise.

Life Saving Support Insurance Scheme for small and medium farmers

1832. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any recommendation by any Commission to inititate a Life Saving Support Insurance Scheme to save the small by medium farmers from the pitfalls of market;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to implement these recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) National Commission on Farmers (NCF) in its first report on 'serving farmers and saving farming' has recommended integrated life 'Saving Support Programme which *inter alia* includes improvement in the existing crop insurance system and introduction of an integrated insurance package covering accident/death/medical cover, loss to dwelling unit and other property.

(c) A Joint Group was constituted by the Government of India to study the improvements required in the existing crop insurance scheme. The Group has submitted its report and has suggested number of improvements. The Government, at present, is consulting different stakeholders for the improvements in the existing crop insurance scheme.

Assistance to Andhra Pradesh under new Agriculture Policy

1833. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the present trend of agricultural production in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the extent to which assistance can be given to the farmers of the State under the new Agriculture Policy; and

(c) the details of assistance provided under the new Agricultural Policy to the farmers of the State in the last one year?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The present trend in the production of foodgrains, oilseeds, cotton, sugarcane and jute & mesta in Andhra Pradesh during the last five years is shown in the table below:

Crops	Production (Million Tonnes)					
	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05*
Foodgrains	13.70	16.03	14.84	10.65	13.70	13.12
Oilseeds	1.38	2.51	1.61	1.26	1.61	2.27
Cotton	1.60	1.66	1.88	1.09	1.89	2.20
Sugarcane	1851	17.69	18.08	15.39	15.07	16.17
Jute & Mesta	0.62	0.69	0.67	0.61	0.47	0.45

*Fourth Advance Estimates

(b) and (c) The Government of India has accorded the highest priority to revitalization of agriculture sector and bringing improvement in the conditions of farmers. For this purpose a number of schemes are undertaken in various State including Andhra Pradesh, and farmers are given assistance under different components. Most of the scheme are being implemented through the State Governments.

With a view to provide flexibility to the States according to the regionally differentiated needs of the States to boost agriculture sector and enhancing yields, the Central Government is implementing the Macro Management Programme by integrating 17 schemes.

Under this programme assistance is provided for various inputs and training of farmers/extension workers as well as supply of critical inputs like seeds, sprayers and water saving devices like sprinklers and drip systems etc.

The approved pattern of assistance is in the ratio of 90:10 for the Centre and the States respectively. The allocations, Central Assistance released and utilization in respect of Andhra Pradesh in 2004-05 were Rs. 3600.00 lakh, Rs. 4363.00 lakh and Rs. 3712.18 lakh respectively. Further under the National Horticulture Mission, schemes pertaining to

horticulture development have been taken up in a more focused manner. So far, an amount of Rs. 4320.96 lakhs has been provided to Andhra Pradesh.

Research regarding viability of Jatropha plant

1834. PROF. P.J. KURIAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE b pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has done any research on the Jatropha plant and its viability for agricultural promotion;

(b) if so, the details of its possible utilities; and

(c) the action taken by Government to promote Jatropha cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

- *Jatropha* oil as bio-fuel.
- *Jatropha* cake as animal feed
- *Jatropha* plant has medicinal value.
- Flowers of *Jatropha* attract bees.
- Use as a wind break or as a hedge for erosion control.
- *Jatropha* oil seed cake is used as organic manure.

(i) The study on evaluation, characterization on *Jatropha curcas* is being carried out under the All India Coordinated Research Network on Underutilized Crops at National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, Pusa Campus, New Delhi through SAUs.

(ii) Adhoc Research Project on Survey, collection, evaluation and multiplication of elite germplasm of *Pongamia pinnata, and Jatropha curcas* at Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture Hyderabad *w.e.f.* 1st April, 2004.

(iii) Adhoc Net work project on 'Tree Borne Oilseeds' (TBOs) at Directorate of oil seeds research, Hyderabad *w.e.f.* 1st April, 2005.

(iv) Research Project on Germplasm collection, genetic improvement and multiplication of elite material in *Jatropha* at Chaudhary Charan